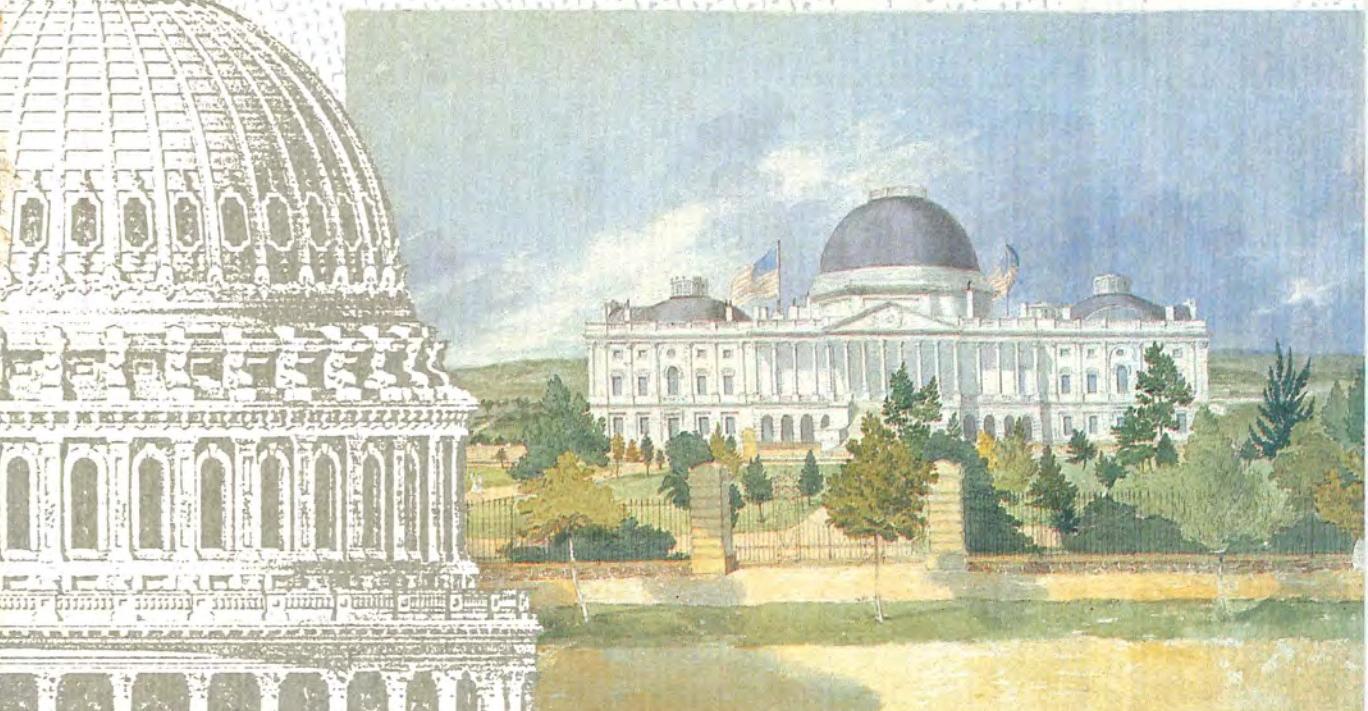


TEMPLE OF LIBERTY



*Building the Capitol
for a New Nation*

MADISON GALLERY
FEBRUARY 24 THROUGH JUNE 24, 1995

A LIBRARY OF CONGRESS EXHIBITION

Temple of Liberty: Building the Capitol for a New Nation was prepared by the Interpretive Programs Office of the Library of Congress in collaboration with the Architect of the Capitol. The exhibition is part of the project to establish a Center for American Architecture, Design, and Engineering at the Library of Congress.

This exhibition was made possible by generous gifts from the James Madison Council of the Library of Congress and the Philip Morris Companies Inc. The exhibition is part of the project to establish a Center for American Architecture, Design, and Engineering at the Library of Congress.

On the cover: John Rubens Smith, "East Front of the Capitol," c. 1828, Prints and Photographs Division, Gift of the Madison Council and Mrs. Joseph Carson



TEMPLE OF LIBERTY

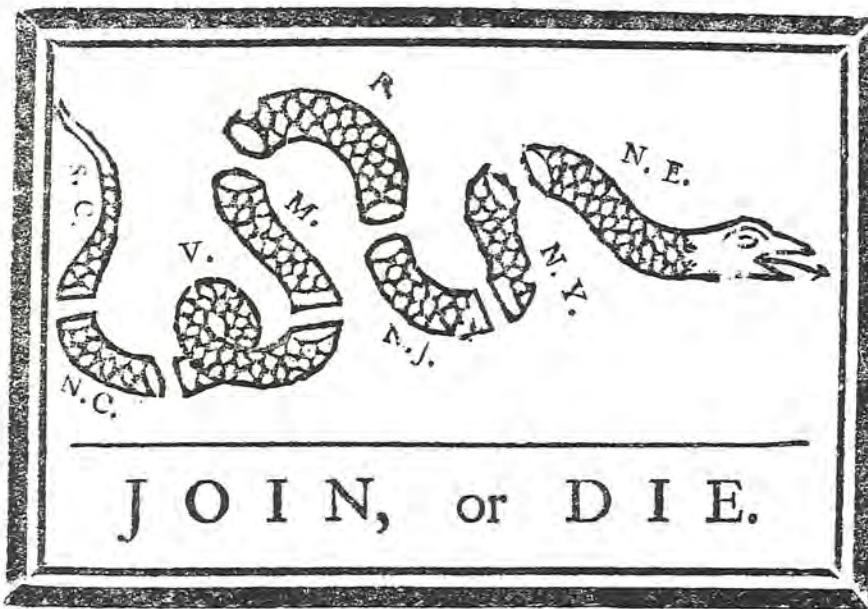
Building the Capitol for a New Nation

"I had found myself from the first adoring the Capitol. . . . The ark of the American covenant may strike one . . . as a compendium of all the national standards, weights and measures and emblems of greatness and glory and indeed as a builded record of half the collective vibrations of a people; their conscious spirit, their public faith, their bewildered taste, their ceaseless curiosity, their arduous and interrupted education."

—Henry James, *The American Scene*, 1907

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were determined that the United States Capitol be a meaningful architectural expression of America's new political and social order. The Constitution, ratified in 1788, had given the country its governing structure. The Capitol, begun three years later, was still incomplete when Congress first met there in November 1800. Construction of the original building took thirty-four years and was directed by six presidents and six architects. Opinions among statesmen and designers differed as to how to achieve a symbolically potent yet functionally efficient building within a Neoclassical framework. Conceiving of themselves as inheritors, guardians, and conveyors of Western civilization, they slowly built a Capitol that drew upon both American and European emblematic and architectural traditions. The Capitol was found to be too small soon after it was completed in 1826. Several proposals during the 1830s and 1840s to extend it either to the east or with new legislative wings attached to the north and south led to a second competition in 1850–1851. The Capitol Extension dwarfed the original structure, dramatically changing its physical appearance, as Victorian exuberance replaced Neoclassical sedateness. During both building campaigns symbolic, aesthetic, and pragmatic issues were of paramount concern, as all the participants recognized they were creating America's most important public building. In addition to legislative chambers, committee rooms, and offices for the Senate and House of Representatives, the Capitol accommodated the Library of Congress until 1897 and the Supreme Court until 1935.

SECTION I. “*A More Perfect Union*”:
*Symbolizing the National
 Union of States*



“Each street is an emblem of the rays of light, which, issuing from the Capitol, are directed towards every part of America, to enlighten its inhabitants respecting their true interests. Each street is also an emblem of the facility, with which the Capitol may be approached, in every respect, and at all times, by every individual, who shall live under the protection of the Union.” —Anonymous description of L’Enfant’s plan, 1795

*S*ymbols are history encoded in visual shorthand. Eighteenth-century Euro-Americans invented or adopted emblems—images accompanied by a motto—and personifications—allegorical figures—to express their political needs. They used them as propaganda tools to draw together the country’s diverse peoples (who spoke many languages) in order to promote national political union, the best hope of securing liberty and equal justice for all.

Benjamin Franklin was responsible for suggesting the country’s first emblem—a native rattlesnake—and its first personification—Hercules. Both symbols were readily understood by Franklin’s contemporaries: the snake

device conveyed the need for political solidarity among the colonies, while the strength of the infant Hercules was likened to the mighty young nation. Subsequent devices continued to symbolize national union, while personifications were generally composite figures that fused ideas of Liberty, America, Wisdom, or Civil Government. Other symbols included eagles, the American flag, Native Americans, and native birds, plants, and animals. The Capitol's early planners drew upon this small but expressive group of accepted American symbols to convey to the public its actual and metaphorical roles.

One of the most interesting allegories to emerge from the Revolution was the "Grand Federal Edifice," an architectural metaphor to represent the Constitution. It was literally a "Temple of Liberty" slowly being constructed in the pages of newspapers as the states gradually ratified the Constitution during 1787 and 1788.

A circular tempietto—a small, circular temple—designed by Charles Willson Peale was built for Philadelphia's grand celebratory parade held on July 4, 1788. Its thirteen columns, motto "In union the fabric stands firm," and crowning figure of Plenty provided an actual as well as metaphorical structure to express the nation's most important political goals. Although the direct antecedent of the Capitol's domed rotunda was Rome's Pantheon, Philadelphia's tempietto and other early American temples had set the stage for a central circular room, dedicated to the modern world's new religion, liberty.

SECTION I CHECKLIST

First American Symbol Was Pre-Revolutionary in Origin

Benjamin Franklin

"Join or Die"

Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia), May 9, 1754

Newspaper

Serial and Government Publications Division

Library of Congress (1)

Eagle Decorating Ancient Roman Temple

Robert Wood

"Soffit of the door of the cell of the Temple"

The Ruins of Palmyra, Otherwise Tedmor in the Desert [sic]. London: 1753, Table XVIII, H Copyprint

Rare Book and Special Collections Division

Library of Congress (4.1)

Paul Revere Adopts Snake Device

Paul Revere

"Unite or Die"

Massachusetts Spy (Boston), July 7, 1774

Newspaper

Serial and Government Publications Division

Library of Congress (2)

Eagles Sacred to Native Americans

John Faber

"Tomo Chachi Mico"

Samuel Urlsperger, *Ausführliche nachricht von den salzburgischen emigranten*. Halle: Wäysenhausens, 1744, frontispiece

Engraving in book

Rare Book and Special Collections Division

Library of Congress (5)

Symbol of the Continental Congress

[Liberty Column Supported by Twelve Arms]

Journal of the Proceedings of the [Continental] Congress Held at Philadelphia, September 5, 1774. Philadelphia:

William and Thomas Bradford, 1774, title page

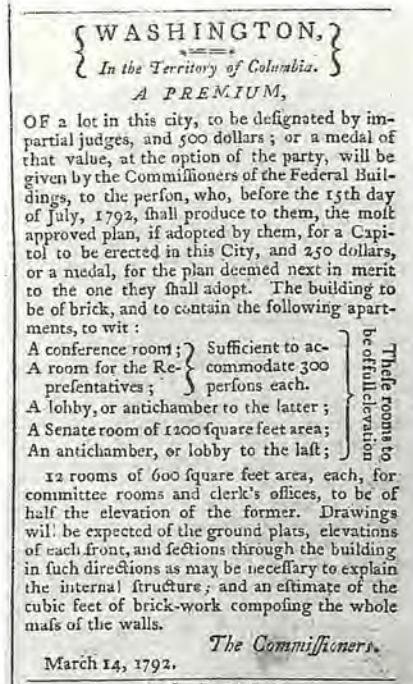
Rare Book and Special Collections Division

Library of Congress (3)

Eagles Identified with Native Americans on Indian Peace Medal	Membership Certificate of Brotherhood of Revolutionary War Officers
Robert Scott	Pierre Charles L'Enfant
Indian Peace Medal, c. 1800	[Society of the Cincinnati Certificate of John Yeamons],
Bronze	January 1784
National Numismatic Collection, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution (6)	Engraving on parchment
	Manuscript Division,
	Library of Congress (14)
Eagle First Suggested for American Symbol	Benjamin Franklin Suggests Infant Hercules to Symbolize America
William Barton	Benjamin Franklin, designer, and Claude-Michel Clodion, sculptor
[Second Design for the Great Seal of The United States], 1782	"Allegory of the American Revolution," 1783
Watercolor on paper	Terra cotta sculpture
National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. (7)	Musée National de la Coopération Franco-Américaine, Blérancourt, France (15)
Final Design of Great Seal of United States	Adult Hercules Suggested as Symbol of America
Charles Thomson	François, Marquis de Barbé-Marbois, designer
[Obverse, Great Seal of the United States]	"Allegory of the American Union," 1784
Ink and crayon on paper	Watercolor on paper
National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. (8)	American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia (16)
First Publication of Great Seal	George Washington Cast as Heroic Virtue
James Trenchard	Joseph Strutt, after Robert Edge Pine
"Arms of the United States"	"Allegory of America," London: 1781
<i>The Columbian Magazine</i> (Philadelphia), September 1786, p. 33	Stipple engraving
Engraving in book	Prints and Photographs Division,
Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (9)	Library of Congress (17)
First Use of Great Seal Eagle for Non-Governmental Purposes	Minerva, or Civic Virtue, Associated with Franklin and Washington
Pierre Charles L'Enfant	W.D. Cooper
[Design for the Society of the Cincinnati Eagle], 1783	"America Trampling on Oppression"
Watercolor on paper	<i>The History of North America</i> , E. Newberry: London, 1789, frontispiece
The Society of the Cincinnati Museum at Anderson House, Washington, D.C. (10)	Engraving in book
	Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
	Library of Congress (18)
First Design for Great Seal	Official Statue of Minerva as American Liberty
After Pierre Eugène du Simitière	Giuseppe Ceracchi
[Design for the Great Seal of the United States], 1776	"Minerva as the Patroness of American Liberty," 1791
Pencil on paper	Copyprint of patinated terra cotta bust
Thomas Jefferson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (11)	Library Company of Philadelphia (19)
Hercules and Minerva First Associated with America	Constitution Allegorized as Architectural Structure
After Benjamin West	"Federal Pillar"
"The Hon. James Otis, jun., Esq."	<i>Massachusetts Centinel</i> (Boston), August 2, 1789
<i>Isaac Bickerstaff's Almanack</i> . Boston: 1770, frontispiece	Newspaper
Engraving in book	Serial and Government Publications Division,
Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (12)	Library of Congress (20)
Minerva as America	"Fame" Announces Ratification of Constitution
"America Triumphant and Britannica in Distress," Boston: 1782	"Tenth Pillar"
Engraving	<i>City Gazette</i> (Charleston), July 22, 1788
Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (13)	Newspaper
	Newspaper Collections, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison (21)

Centennial of Ratification of Constitution Celebrated in Philadelphia 1888 Re-enactment of 1788 Federal Procession Copyprint From the collection of The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia (22)	Classical Temple Dedicated to Liberty, Justice, and Plenty James Trenchard “Temple of Liberty” <i>The Columbian Magazine</i> , (Philadelphia) 1788, opp. p. 473 Engraving in book Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (24)
Modern Philadelphians Reenact July 4, 1788 Federal Procession Alvin Holm, Reconstruction of Charles Willson Peale's Grand Federal Edifice, 1988 Copyprint From the collection of The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia (23)	Meeting Place of First Federal Congress Amos Doolittle “View of the Federal Edifice in New York” <i>The Columbian Magazine</i> (Philadelphia), August 1789 Engraving in book Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (25)

SECTION II. *“The Most Approved Plan”: The Competition for the Capitol’s Design*



“We wish to express in some Degree in the Style of our Architecture, the sublime sentiments of Liberty which are common to Frenchmen and Americans.” – Commissioners of the District of Columbia seeking workmen writing to officials in Bordeaux, France, 1793

OPEN COMPETITION

Thomas Jefferson decided that the Capitol's design should be chosen by a public competition, and advertisements began appearing in American newspapers in March 1792. The entries were disappointing to the judges—Washington, Jefferson, and the Commissioners of the District of Columbia. Most of the entries survive to this day. From today's viewpoint, they are a revealing reflection of the talent available among America's amateurs, builder-architects, and professionals.

The published guidelines stipulated matters of fact—size and number of rooms and materials—not issues of taste, such as style of architecture, historical association, or symbolic meaning. Thus, the competitors themselves proposed ideas of how to convey America's new political structure and social order. Their suggestions, ranging from simple to complex, economical to expensive, reflected commonly held beliefs about America's governing population—primarily farmers and merchants—or promoted benefits promised by the Constitution.

INVITED COMPETITION

The open competition was a failure because no design submitted was considered suitable. The commissioners then hired Stephen Hallet (1755–1825), a recent French emigré and the only professional architect who competed, to make additional proposals. Hallet's sophisticated drawings were derived from French architectural traditions, but he responded directly to American themes in his proposed symbolic sculpture. He used classical allegories already accepted as relevant to America to convey Revolutionary-era ideals, the structure of the federal government, and the history of the discovery, exploration, and settlement of the new world.

In January 1793, physician and amateur architect William Thornton (1759–1828) entered the competitive process for the first time. The design he sent to Washington immediately captivated the judges, who awarded it the first prize. Hallet responded with a final design similar in general outline to Thornton's. A conference held in Philadelphia on July 15, 1793, resulted in a compromise: Thornton's exterior was to be married to Hallet's interiors.

SECTION II CHECKLIST

- Portrait of Washington From Life**
 Jean-Antoine Houdon
 Bust of George Washington
 Marble
 © 1994 Board of Trustees,
 National Gallery of Art, Washington
 Gift of Robert L. McNeil, Jr., in Honor of the
 Fiftieth Anniversary of the National Gallery of
 Art (26)
- Portrait of Jefferson from Life**
 After Jean-Antoine Houdon
 Bust of Thomas Jefferson
 Plaster
 Library of Congress (27)
- Jefferson's Pragmatic Design for
 the Federal City**
 Thomas Jefferson
 [Proposed Plan of Federal City], March 1791
 Ink on paper
 Thomas Jefferson Papers, Manuscript Division,
 Library of Congress (28)
- Domed Rotunda for Capitol First**
 Proposed by L'Enfant
 Pierre Charles L'Enfant
 "Plan of the City of Washington," March 1792
 Engraving on paper
 Geography and Map Division,
 Library of Congress (29)
- Capitol Competition Guidelines**
 Thomas Johnson and Thomas Jefferson
 [Announcement of Capitol Design Competition]
Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser (Philadelphia),
 March 24, 1792
 Newspaper
 Serial and Government Publications Division,
 Library of Congress (30)
- Possible Capitol Proposal based on
 French Pantheon**
 Attributed to Thomas Jefferson
 [Studies for the Capitol?, Plan and Elevation],
 c. 1792
 Ink on paper
 Massachusetts Historical Society (31)
- Jefferson Suggests Circular Capitol**
 Thomas Jefferson
 [Study for the Capitol, Plan], c. 1792
 Ink on paper
 Massachusetts Historical Society (32)
- Ancient Roman Pantheon Inspires
 Jefferson's Capitol Design**
 Antoine Desgodetz
 "Elevation de la face du Pantheon, a Rome"
Les édifices antiques de Rome. Paris:
 Claude-Antoine Jombert, 1779
 Engraving in book
 Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
 Library of Congress (33)

- German Engineer's Entry in Capitol
 Competition**
 Charles Wintersmith
 [Section, Elevation, and Plan of
 Capitol Design No. 1], 1792
 Ink, watercolor, and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (34)
- Baltimore Architect Suggests Dome
 Similar to Maryland Statehouse**
 Jacob Small
 "For Congress Hall," 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (35)
- Octagonal Conference Room for Joint
 Sessions of Congress**
 Jacob Small
 "Conference Roome," 1792
 Ink, watercolor, and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (36)
- Octagonal Irish House of Commons
 Source of Small's Conference Room**
 Rowland Omer
 "A Section of the House of Commons,
 Dublin," 1767
 Engraving on paper
 Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland,
 Dublin (36.1)
- Twelve Labors of Hercules Decorate
 Capitol Competition Entry**
 Philip Hart
 "Elevation of a Capitol," 1792
 Ink on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (37)
- Sculptural Symbols Explained by Architect**
 Robert Goin Lanphier
 "Elevation for the Capitol," 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (38)
- Modest Capitol Design with Courtyard
 Based on Renaissance Palace**
 James Diamond
 "Section of the back Front on the Court Side,"
 and "Back Front or Flank, to Plan No. 1 for a
 Capitol," 1792
 Ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (39)
- Giant Eagle Identifies Capitol as
 Congress's Building**
 James Diamond
 "An Elevation for a Capitol," 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (40)

- Elaborate Palladian Windows Light Entire Capitol**
James Diamond
 "An Elevation for a Capitol for Plan No. 2," 1792
 Ink and watercolor ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (41)
- Palladio's Basilica in Venice Model for Capitol**
Giacomo Leoni, after Andrea Palladio [Basilica, Venice]
The Architecture of Palladio in Four Books, 3rd. ed. vol. 1. London: 1742, Plate XX
 Engraving in book
 Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (42)
- Renaissance Farmhouse Deemed Appropriate as Model for Nation of Farmers**
Samuel Dobie
 "No. 2 of Saml. Dobie invt. & del. for a Capitol to be built Det. in the City of Washington," 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (43)
- First Renaissance House with Dome and Giant Porticoes**
Andrea Palladio [Villa Rotunda]
I Quattro Libri de l'Architettura, Venice: Bartolomeo Corampello, 1601,
 "Libro Secundo," p. 19
 Engraving in book
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (44.1)
- Domed Central Room Dominates Capitol Proposal**
Samuel Dobie
 "No. 3 of Saml. Dobie inv. & del. for a Capital [sic] to be Built in the City of Washington," 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (45)
- Massachusetts Housewright Plans English-Inspired Capitol**
Samuel McIntire
 "Plan of the second Floor & Elevation of the Principal Front," 1792
 Ink on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (46)
- Rare Book in Harvard Library Inspires Capitol Design**
Colen Campbell
 "The First Design of the West Front of Wansted"
Vitruvius Britannicus, vol. 1. London: 1715, Plate 22
 Engraving in book
 Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (47)
- Sculptural Figures of Americans in Contemporary Dress**
Samuel McIntire
 "No. 2. Elevation of the Back Front and Plan of the Lower Floor and Plan for Capitol Design," 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (48)
- Elegant Carved Decoration Proposed by Accomplished Woodcarver**
Samuel McIntire
 [Elevation and Sections for Capitol Design], 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (49a, 49b)
- Schoolmaster Proposes Plain, Unpretentious Capitol**
Andrew Mayfield Carshore
 "Respective [sic] View of the Federal House," 1792
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (50)
- Pre-Competition Design Shown to Jefferson**
Stephen Hallet
 [Elevation of First Design of Capitol] "Plan B 2," c. 1791
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (51)
- Dome Symbolizes France's Geographic and Political Union**
Israel Silvestre
 "Vue et Perspective du Collège des 4 Nations"
Adam Perelle, Vues des Plus Belles Maisons de France. Paris: I. Mariette, c. 1700
 Engraving in book
 Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (52)
- Circular Staircase in Rotunda Leads to Viewing Platform**
Stephen Hallet
 [Plan of First Design of Capitol], c. 1792
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (53)
- Meeting Place of French National Assembly**
Isidore-Stanislas Helman, engraver, after Charles Monnet
 "Assemblée nationale, Abandon de tous les priviléges dans la séance de la nuit du 4 au 5 août 1789," 1789
 Engraving
 Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (54)
- Classical Temple Proposed for Capitol**
Stephen Hallet
 [Plan of Capitol Competition Entry], 1792
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (55)

- Jefferson's Design for Virginia Capitol**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "View of the City of Richmond from the Bank of the James River," 1798
 Watercolor on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (56)
- Economical Brick and Stone-Trimmed Capitol Design**
 Stephen Hallet
 [Elevation of Third Design for Capitol], 1792
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (57)
- Washington Advises on Capitol Design**
 Stephen Hallet
 [Elevation of Fourth Design for Capitol], 1793
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (58)
- Dome Serves as Belvedere Tower**
 Stephen Hallet
 [Section of Fourth Design for the Capitol], 1793
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (59)
- The Capitol as a Grand English Palace**
 William Thornton
 [West Elevation, "Tortola" Plan for a Capitol], 1792
 Watercolor on paper
 The Prints and Drawings Collection, The Octagon, The Museum of the American Architectural Foundation, Washington (60)
- View from Mall of English Palace Design**
 William Thornton
 [East Elevation, "Tortola" Plan for the Capitol], 1792
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 The Prints and Drawings Collection, The Octagon, The Museum of the American Architectural Foundation, Washington (61)
- Winning Design of Capitol Competition**
 Robert King
 "A Map of the City of Washington in the District of Columbia," 1818
 Engraved map
 Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress (62)
- Winning Design's Mall Facade Reconstructed**
 Don Alexander Hawkins
 [Reconstruction of Thornton's West Front], 1994
 Copyprint from silver gelatin print
 Courtesy of Don Alexander Hawkins (63)
- Principal Floor Plan of Winning Design**
 Don Alexander Hawkins
 [Reconstruction of Thornton's Principal Floor Plan], 1994
 Copyprint from silver-gelatin print
 Courtesy of Don Alexander Hawkins (64)
- Sculptural Panels Celebrate America's Discovery**
 Stephen Hallet
 [Elevation of Fifth Design for Capitol], 1793
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (65)
- Conference Room Based on Roman Pantheon**
 Stephen Hallet
 [Cross Section through the Conference Room of Fifth Design for Capitol], 1793
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (66)
- Elliptical Rooms for Legislative Chambers**
 Stephen Hallet
 [Principal Floor, Plan of Fifth Design for Capitol], 1793
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (67)
- Plan From Which Capitol's Foundations Were Laid**
 Stephen Hallet
 [Conference Plan], 1793
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (68)
- Square Courtyard Precedes Rotunda as Capitol's Central Space**
 Copy after Stephen Hallet by Daniel Bell
 [Post Conference Capitol Plan], 1793–1794
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (69)
- Cornerstone Ceremony Recreated**
 After Thomas Crawford; [?] Nolley, maker
 [Laying the Cornerstone of the United States Capitol], c. 1853–1857
 Plaster relief sculpture
 Architect of the Capitol
 Donated by the U.S. Capitol Historical Society (70)

SECTION III. “*The Temple of Justice and Faith*”: *The Capitol’s East and West Porticoes and Dome*



“The first temple dedicated to the sovereignty of the people, embellishing with Athenian taste the course of a nation looking far beyond the range of Athenian destinies.”

—Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1812

In 1791 Pierre Charles L’Enfant had located his “Congress House” atop Jenkins Hill, “which stands as a pedestal waiting for a monument.” He proposed for it a domed rotunda facing west. Subsequent architects designed domes to identify the Capitol on the city’s skyline. Impressive central porticoes facing east and west transcended entry points. Rather they drew visitors to the rotunda, perceived from the beginning as a great public meeting place,

first a monument to Washington, but soon a “Hall of the People,” a usage probably proposed by Jefferson. The entire ensemble of dome, rotunda, and porticoes occupied fully one-third of the original Capitol’s mass. These symbolic areas were balanced by actual functional spaces, the chambers, committee rooms, and offices in the wings. The general outline of the Capitol’s compact and coherent exterior was established in 1793. Minor changes were confined to the central section, not constructed until 1818–1826.

WILLIAM THORNTON

Winning the Capitol competition in 1793 began William Thornton’s (1759–1828) long and distinguished Washington career. Because the physician and amateur architect was not capable of overseeing its construction, Stephen Hallet was named superintending architect. In 1794 Washington appointed Thornton one of three Commissioners of the District of Columbia, a position that gave him considerable authority to monitor the Capitol’s early development.

GEORGE HADFIELD

When English-trained architect George Hadfield (1763–1826) was appointed superintendent of the Capitol’s construction on October 15, 1795, he brought to the job superb academic credentials, widely praised talent, but little practical experience. Later architects incorporated some of his suggested changes to the Capitol’s design—an octagonal base for the dome and a staircase entry on the east front—but little is known of the three years he spent building the Senate wing’s interiors.

JAMES HOBAN

During the 1790s James Hoban (c. 1762–1821) successfully carried out his winning design for the President’s House and supervised Stephen Hallet’s and George Hadfield’s work at the Capitol. In 1801 newly elected President Jefferson chose Hoban’s scheme to erect the hall for the House of Representatives as a free-standing oval room to be attached to the south wing’s exterior walls at a later date. Faulty construction of his brick arcade, wood gallery, and timber-framed roof led to the room’s dismantling in the spring of 1804.

BENJAMIN HENRY LATROBE

The collaboration between Jefferson and Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1764–1820), between informed amateur and consummate professional, resulted in the Capitol’s most beautiful spaces as well as its most meaningful elements. Latrobe was appointed by Jefferson in 1803 and worked intermittently until the War of 1812 brought the Capitol’s construction to a halt. On August 24, 1814, British troops burned the Capitol. President James Madison reappointed Latrobe in 1815 but he resigned two years later because he was unable to cope with new bureaucratic strictures.

Latrobe’s redesign of Thornton’s “center building”—the dome, rotunda, porticoes, and, in 1815, a projecting west wing—visually diminished the impact of the legislative wings. In 1806 Latrobe and Jefferson designed a new east front to have a compelling colonnade-portico-staircase combination that drew visitors into the rotunda. By 1808–1809 Latrobe began thinking of refinements, considering novel ways to light the rotunda, designing an exterior sculptural frieze to decorate the dome’s octagonal base, and planning a separate stately temple entrance on the Capitol’s east front. When Latrobe resigned in 1817, he had rebuilt the interiors of both wings twice and was about to build the center building.

CHARLES BULFINCH

Charles Bulfinch (1763–1844) completed the Capitol in 1826, eight years after taking over its superintendence from Latrobe. The major changes he made to Latrobe’s west wing exterior were the insertion of a subbasement and an unusual arrangement of double and single columns for its portico. The high profile of Bulfinch’s wood outer dome was suggested by James Monroe and John Quincy Adams to insure that the Capitol be easily identified from anywhere in the city. Although this dome had a short life (25 years), it was often recorded by early photographers and printmakers. Bulfinch left his most lasting stamp on the Capitol’s rotunda, changing its symbolic direction from a monument to a history museum in which America’s discovery and settlement by many peoples were recounted.

SECTION III CHECKLIST

Portrait of Competition Winner
 Charles-Balthazar-Julien Févret de St. Mémin
 Portrait of William Thornton, c. 1799–1804
 Chalk on paper
 The Octagon, The Museum of the American Architectural Foundation, Washington (71)

Winning Design Modified
 William Thornton
 [Revised East Elevation, Capitol Design], c. 1795–1797
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (72)

Temple of Fame or Virtue Added to Winning Design
 William Thornton
 [Revised West Elevation of the Capitol], c. 1797–1798
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (73)

Capitol as It Was Envisioned About 1797
 Architectural Model of Thornton's Revised Design of the Capitol
 Plastic model, 1994
 Architect of the Capitol (74)

Thornton Sketches Free-Standing Temple Design
 William Thornton
 [Sketch of Section of Monument and Conference Room], c. 1797
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (75)

Wall Pattern for Wings Never Changed
 William Thornton
 [East Elevation for North Wing], 1795–1797
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (76)

Elaborate Corinthian Order Expresses Capitol's Importance
 William Thornton/Charles Bulfinch
 Corinthian Capital from East Front
 Portico of the Capitol, 1825
 Copyprint of Aquia sandstone sculpture
 Architect of the Capitol (77)

English Architectural Treatise Consulted by Thornton
 "The Corinthian Order"
 Sir William Chambers, *A Treatise on Civil Architecture*. London: John Haberkorn, 1759, Plate 12F
 Engraving in book
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (78)

English Architect Hired to Execute Capitol Suggests Changes
 Attributed to Alexander Jackson Davis, after George Hadfield
 "Plan for the Capitol, Washington, by George Hadfield, first Arc. 1795," c. 1831–1834
 Watercolor on paper
 Machen Collection
 The Historical Society of Washington, D.C. (79)

Unexecuted Capitol Design Chosen by Local Newspaper
 George Hadfield
 [Perspective of the West Front of the Capitol]
Washington Gazette, February 2, 1819
 Copyprint from newspaper
 Serial and Government Publications Division, Library of Congress (80)

Simplification of Capitol Design Suggested
 Attributed to George Hadfield
 [East and West Elevations of the Capitol], c. 1795
 Ink on paper
 Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (81a, 81b)

Capitol as It Might Have Appeared in 1804
 William C. Allen
 [Conjectural Reconstruction of House of Representatives in 1804], 1989
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (82)

First View of Capitol as Actually Built
 William Birch
 "View of the Capitol," 1800
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (83)

Portrait of Capitol's Most Significant Architect
 Charles Willson Peale
 "Benjamin Henry Latrobe," c. 1804
 Oil painting
 The White House, Washington, D.C. (84)

Capitol's Minor Rooms in Evolution
 William Thornton
 [Plan of Ground Story of the Capitol], c. 1795–1797
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (85)

Thornton Plans Alternate Conference Room Design
 William Thornton
 [Plan of the Principal Floor of the Capitol], c. 1793–1797
 Ink and water color on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (86)

Thornton Adds Offices Around House Chamber

William Thornton

[Plan of the Ground Story of the Capitol], c. 1794–1800

Ink and watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (87)

Latrobe Presents Jefferson with Watercolor of Capitol's New Design

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[General View of the Capitol from the Northeast], 1806

Watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (88)

Jefferson Used Ancient Prototype for Capitol's New East Portico

Robert Wood

"Temple"

The Ruins of Palmyra, Otherwise Tedmor in the Desart [sic]. London: 1753, Table XIV

Engraving in book

Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (88.1)

Latrobe Plans Dome with Hidden Light Source and Recessed West Portico

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[Study for a West Front], c. 1808–1809

Watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (89)

Latrobe Plans Relief Sculpture for Drum of Dome

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[Perspective View of the Capitol from the Northeast]," 1810

Watercolor on paper

Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore (90)

Famous Greek Sculptural Frieze Probable Source for Capitol's Proposed Frieze

[Panathenaic Procession]

James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, vol. 2. London: John Haberkorn, 1762, Plate XVIII

Engraving in book

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (91)

Capitol First Considered in Relation to Its Grounds

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[Plan of the Mall and the Capitol Grounds], 1815

Watercolor on paper

Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress (92)

Capitol as Redesigned by Latrobe about 1811

Architectural Model of Benjamin Henry Latrobe's c. 1811 Design for the Capitol Plastic model, 1994

Architect of the Capitol (93)

Side View Showing Incline of Capitol Hill

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[South Elevation of the Capitol with Propylaea], c. 1811

Watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (94)

Capitol's Proposed Entrance as a Greek Temple

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[West Elevation of the Capitol with Propylaea], c. 1811

Watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (95)

Giant Statue of Liberty Proposed for Capitol's East Front

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[Figure of Athena or Minerva as American Liberty], c. 1811

Watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (96)

Capitol and Other Public Buildings Burnt by British on August 24, 1814

Charles Turner after John James Hall

"Admiral Sir John Cockburn," 1819

Engraving

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (97)

Washington Visitor Sketches

Burned Capitol

George Heriot

[View of Burned Capitol], 1815

Watercolor on paper

Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York (98)

Portrait of Architect Who Completed Original Capitol

Mather Brown

"Portrait of Charles Bulfinch," 1786

Copyprint of oil painting

Courtesy of the Harvard University Portait Collection,

Harvard University Art Museums

Gift of Francis V. Bulfinch (99)

Bulfinch Adds Subbasement for Additional Offices

Charles Bulfinch

[Sketch of West Front of the Capitol in Letter to

John Trumbull], April 17, 1818

Pencil on paper

John Trumbull Papers

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (100)

First Publication of Capitol with Bulfinch's New West Front Design

W.I. Stone

"Correct Map of the City of Washington," 1820

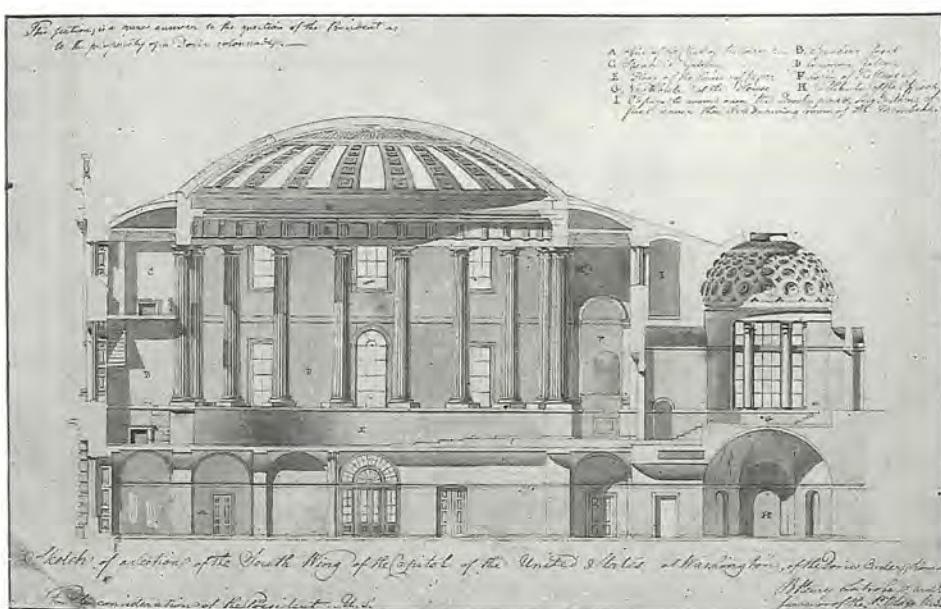
Engraved map

Geography and Map Division,

Library of Congress (101)

- English Architect Copies Bulfinch's East Elevation**
 Charles A. Busby
 "The Capitol at Washington. Elevation of the Principal Front," 1823
 Etching on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (102)
- Hemispherical and Stilted-Arch Domes Compared**
 Charles Bulfinch
 [Alternate designs for the U.S. Capitol Dome], c. 1824
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (103)
- Early Perspective Drawing of Completed Capitol**
 Attributed to George Strickland
 [Perspective drawing of the Capitol from the Northeast], c. 1830–1840
 Ink on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (104)
- Only Known Photograph of West Front Before Extension**
 Unknown Photographer
 [West Front of Capitol], c. 1848
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (105)
- Capitol as Completed in 1826**
 Architectural Model of Charles Bulfinch's Capitol
 Plastic model, 1994
 Architect of the Capitol (106)
- West Terrace Continues Ground Level of East Side**
 Charles Bulfinch
 [Site Plan of the Capitol], c. 1826–29
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (107)
- Bulfinch Gatehouses and West Entry**
 John Rubens Smith
 [West Front of the Capitol with Gatehouses], c. 1828
 Watercolor on paper
 John Rubens Smith Collection
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress
 Gift of the Madison Council and Mrs. Joseph Carson (108)
- Watercolor Commemorates Marquis de Lafayette's 1824 Visit to Capitol**
 Charles Burton
 "West Front of the Capitol of the United States," 1824
 Watercolor on paper
 Lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art
 Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1942 (109)
- Comparison Between Temple of Liberty and Nearby Log Cabins**
 John Rubens Smith
 [West Front of the Capitol], c. 1828
 Pencil on paper
 John Rubens Smith Collection
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress
 Gift of the Madison Council and Mrs. Joseph Carson (110)
- View of Capitol in 1828 Showing Botanical Garden**
 John Rubens Smith
 [West Front of the Capitol], c. 1828
 Watercolor on paper
 John Rubens Smith Collection
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress
 Gift of the Madison Council and Mrs. Joseph Carson (111)
- Early Picturesque Landscaping of Capitol Grounds**
 John Rubens Smith
 [East Front of the Capitol], c. 1830s
 Watercolor on paper
 John Rubens Smith Collection
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress
 Gift of the Madison Council and Mrs. Joseph Carson (112)
- Capitol Overlooks Pastoral Landscape**
 Russell Smith
 "Capitol from Mr. Elliot's Garden," c. 1839
 Oil on paper
 Architect of the Capitol
 Donated by the
 U.S. Capitol Historical Society (113)
- Only Known Photograph of Capitol's East Front Before Extension**
 John Plumbe
 [East Front of the Capitol], 1846
 Copyprint
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (114)
- John Quincy Adams Advises on Capitol Sculpture**
 After Luigi Persico
Genius of America, 1825–1828
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (115)
- War as Classical Figure of Mars**
 After Luigi Persico
War, 1834
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (116)
- Peace Personified as Ceres, Classical Goddess of Agriculture**
 After Luigi Persico
Peace, 1834
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (117)

SECTION IV. “To throw the labor of the artist upon the shoulders of the President of the United States”: The House and Senate Wings



“There can be no question that the old Hall of Representatives was a noble room. Even the British officer, who was ordered to destroy it, is reported to have said, as he stood at the entrance ‘that it was a pity of burn anything so beautiful.’”

—John H.B. Latrobe, 1881

Inadequate funding and material and manpower shortages dictated the Capitol’s phased construction. The north or Senate wing was begun first because its numerous rooms could house the entire Congress until the south wing was built. In fact, the House of Representatives, Senate, Supreme Court, and Library of Congress all moved into the north wing when the federal government settled permanently in Washington in 1800.

Contrary to the rules established by Renaissance architectural theorists, Jefferson suggested locating both the House and Senate chambers at ground level rather than on the second floor. Both were to be double-story rooms with visitors galleries that overlooked legislative proceedings below. However on the exterior the main story seemed to be the second story. Apparently, Jefferson wished to emphasize the easy accessibility of America's political system and at the same time the supremacy of the people. Both the first Senate chamber designed by Stephen Hallet and the first hall for the House of Representatives designed by James Hoban were built following Jefferson's suggestion; both were replaced because of faulty construction.

Before the War of 1812, Latrobe redesigned and rebuilt most of the north wing interiors, placing a new semicircular Supreme Court on the ground floor and a new Senate directly above it. Only the Supreme Court survived the fire of August 24, 1814, nearly intact. Latrobe demonstrated his genius as an architect in his design for the courtroom and two adjacent vestibules. The vestibules contained Latrobe's most memorable symbols, corncob and tobacco leaf and flower capitals for his newly invented American orders (columns with their capitals and entablatures).

SENATE CHAMBER

The present old Senate is the fourth room expressly designed to accommodate the Senate within the walls of the Capitol, including a temporary one used while the second was under construction. Latrobe designed suitable architectural and emblematic sculpture for his two permanent Senate chambers. For his first permanent room, begun in 1808, he combined Greek Ionic columns, a new magnolia flower order, and thirteen caryatids (columns in the form of women in classical clothing) carrying shields with the state seals because the Senate was the "assembly of the states." For his enlarged Senate built after the fire (the present room), Latrobe retained the Ionic order and the caryatids, destroyed by 1830.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Latrobe's first Library of Congress, located across the hall from the Senate chamber, was a two-and-one-half story room. He decorated it in the Egyptian Revival style to link the Library of Congress with one of the Seven

Wonders of the Ancient World, the library of Ptolemy Philadelphus founded in Alexandria, Egypt, in 540 B.C.

When Latrobe added a west wing to the Capitol in 1815, his new Library of Congress spanned its entire facade, with doors opening onto the west portico that overlooked the Mall. Although Latrobe may have again planned Egyptian decoration, the library actually constructed by Charles Bulfinch between 1818 and 1823 had Greek Revival details, its simple and stately columns based on those of the Athenian Tower of the Winds built about 50 B.C. Bulfinch's library was destroyed by fire in 1851.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Because of its large size, designing and constructing a hall for the House of Representatives proved to be the most difficult of the Capitol's many architectural problems. The present Old House Chamber, now Statuary Hall, succeeded Hoban's temporary, timber-roofed room and Latrobe's first hall that was destroyed in the 1814 fire. Latrobe reserved the most elaborate decoration for his House chambers because he considered the House the body most representative of the people. For the third chamber, he chose Corinthian capitals based on the Greek Choragic Monument to Lysicrates, an often-copied monument in Athens, for the colonnades of both rooms. The first was built of soft brown Aquia sandstone, including a statue of Liberty above the Speaker's chair and four allegorical figures of Agriculture, Art, Science, and Commerce carved in relief in the entablature. Latrobe had the Corinthian capitals carved in Italy of white Carrera marble. They capped column shafts of mottled gray breccia quarried in Virginia, both cool accents in a room with brown sandstone walls. Latrobe acknowledged he used this varied coloristic effect to vie with ancient Roman buildings, one of several statements he made comparing his work at the Capitol favorably with great world monuments.

THE ROTUNDA AND DOME

During the rotunda's slow evolution, each of the Capitol's architects proposed different solutions for its use, meaning, and architectural character. William Thornton originally conceived of the crypt and rotunda together as a pilgrimage place, Washington's burial place and his monument. He proposed

placing a white marble equestrian statue in the center of the rotunda and a cenotaph, or empty tomb, directly beneath it. In 1806 Latrobe intended to expand the rotunda's iconography by including twenty-four niches in the rotunda wall to shelter statues of Revolutionary-era heroes. Four massive semicircular staircases would lead from the rotunda to the crypt and Washington's tomb. In 1817 Congress commissioned from John Trumbull four history paintings of Washington's two most famous military victories and two great civic events, the signing of the Declaration of Independence and Washington resigning his commission as Commander of the Continental Army.

In the 1820s Charles Bulfinch continued to change the rotunda's symbolic direction from mausoleum and monument to history museum. He commissioned eight sculpted panels on the theme of the discovery and settlement of North America. Narrative panels above the doors depicted pre-Revolutionary events beginning with Columbus's discovery of America. Portraits of great explorers—Christopher Columbus, John Cabot, René LaSalle, and Sir Walter Raleigh—decorated the walls above the paintings. Four additional history paintings, installed between 1840 and 1855, continued the theme of the European exploration and peopling of America, subtly making official the concept of "Manifest Destiny," the seemingly inevitable movement of European civilization westward across the continent.

SECTION IV CHECKLIST

Latrobe's First Major Revisions Presented to Jefferson
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
"Plan of the Principal Story of the Capitol, U.S.," 1806
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (118)

Latrobe's Post-Fire Revisions Include New West Wing
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
"Plan of the Principal Floor at the Capitol, U.S.," 1817
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (119)

Latrobe's 1808 Supreme Court as Restored
 General View of the Supreme Court, c. 1976
 Copyprint
 Architect of Capitol (120)

Plan of Latrobe's First Supreme Court Design
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
"Ground Plan of the North Wing of the Capitol of the United States," 1806
 Watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (121)

Greek and Roman Architecture Combined in Supreme Court Design
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
"Sections of the Court Room, N.[orth] Wing, Capitol," c. 1808
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (122)

Supreme Court's Archaic Greek Doric Columns
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
"Column of the Court Room, North Wing of the Capitol," c. 1816
 Watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (123)

Published Engravings of Archaic Greek Doric Columns

Thomas Major

"Members and Measures of the Hexastyle Ipetral Temple"

Ruins of Paestum, Otherwise Posidonia, in Magna Graecia. London: T. Major, 1768, Table XII

Engraving in book

Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (124.1)

Unexecuted Design of Justice for Supreme Court

Carlo Franzoni

[*Justice*], c. 1815–1889

Pencil on paper

Historical Society of Washington (125)

A Second Unexecuted Design of Justice for Supreme Court

Carlo Franzoni

[*Justice*], c. 1815–1819

Pencil on paper

Historical Society of Washington (126)

Latrobe's Revised Main Floor Plan of North Wing

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

"Plan, shewing the alterations proposed in the principal Story of the North Wing of the Capitol," 1806

Ink and watercolor on paper

Architect of the Capitol

Donated by the U.S. Capitol Historical Society (127)

Post-Fire Plan of North Wing Showing Latrobe's New Circular Vestibule

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

"Plan of the Principal Story of the North Wing of the Capitol U.S. as authorised to be built, 1817"

Ink and watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division,

Library of Congress (128)

Famous Corncob Order Vestibule

Designed by Latrobe in 1808

Benjamin Henry Latrobe, designer; Giuseppe Franzoni, sculptor

Corn Capital Vestibule to Supreme Court, c. 1976

Copyprint

Architect of Capitol (129)

Corn Order Adopted by Other Architects as the American Order

Alexander Jackson Davis

[Corn Order from the Capitol, Washington], c. 1832–1834

Copyprint of ink and wash drawing

Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1924 (130)

Latrobe's American Order Derived from Tobacco Flowers and Leaves

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[Section of the Tobacco Leaf Rotunda], 1816

Ink and watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division,

Library of Congress (131)

Capitol's Ceiling Details Recorded by Famous Architect

Alexander Jackson Davis

[Partial Ceiling Plans of Library of Congress and Tobacco Order Rotunda], c. 1831–1834

Pencil on paper

From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (132)

Latrobe Sends Jefferson Sketch of Tobacco Capital

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[Letter to Thomas Jefferson with sketch of tobacco leaf capital], November 5, 1816

Ink on paper

Thomas Jefferson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (133)

Example of Tobacco Capital Sent to Jefferson

Designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe, executed by Francisco Iardella

Tobacco capital, 1817

Sandstone

Monticello/Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Inc., Charlottesville (134)

Latrobe's Second Senate Chamber of 1815–1818 Restored

Benjamin Henry Latrobe, designer

Old Senate Chamber, ca. 1976

Copyprint

Architect of the Capitol (135)

Most Popular Greek Ionic Capital Used in Senate Chamber

Julien David LeRoy

[Ionic Order]

Les ruines plus beaux des monuments de la Grèce.

Paris: H.L. Guerin and L.F. Delatour, 1758, Plate XX

Engraving in book

Prints and Photographs Division,

Library of Congress (136)

Unusual Double Skylight for Senate

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

[Details of the Senate Ceiling and Roof], c. 1807–1809

Watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division,

Library of Congress (137)

Latrobe's Second American Order

Based on Magnolia Flower

Benjamin Henry Latrobe

"Details of the Upper Columns in the Gallery of the Entrance of the Chamber of the Senate, U[nited] States," 1809

Watercolor on paper

Prints and Photographs Division,

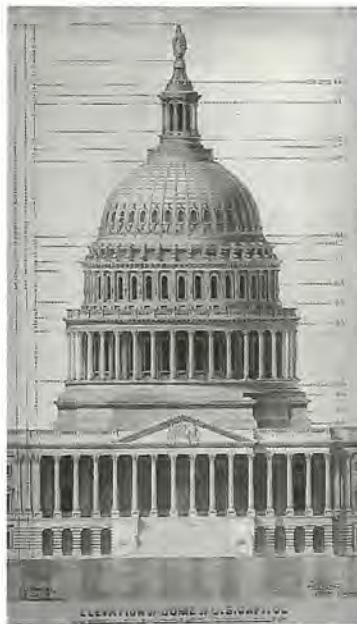
Library of Congress (139)

- Egyptian Revival Library of Congress**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Design of the Library of Congress of the United States, North Wing of the Capitol," 1808
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (140)
- Details of Library's Egyptian Columns**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Details of the Library of the Congress U.S. in the N.[orth] Wing of the Capitol Washington," c. 1808–1816
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (141)
- Most Detailed Surviving View of Bulfinch's Library of Congress**
 Andrew Jackson Davis
 "View Congress Library, Capitol, Washington," 1832
 Pen and ink and wash on paper
 I.N. Phelps Stokes Collection
 Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs
 The New York Public Library, New York Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations (142)
- White House's Architect Designs First House of Representatives Chamber**
 Attributed to James Hoban
 [Projected Design of Hall for the House of Representatives], c. 1801
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Thomas Jefferson Papers, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville (143)
- Latrobe Accedes to Jefferson's Idea of Skylit House Chamber**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 [Longitudinal Section of the Hall of Representatives], 1804
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (144)
- American Bald Eagle Decorates House Chamber**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 [Letter to Charles Willson Peale with eagle in entablature], April 18, 1806
 Ink on paper
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (145)
- Hippodrome Shape for House Chamber Revived**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 [Plan of the House of Representatives], c. 1808–1813
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (146)
- Latrobe Directed by Jefferson to Design Doric House of Representatives**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Sketch of a Section of the Capitol of the United States at Washington, of the Doric Order, Roman," 1804
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (148)
- Rows of Skylights Alternate with Coffers in House Ceiling**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Plan of the Framing of the Roof of the Hall of Rep.[resentatives], Wash.[ington]" and "Ceiling of the Hall of Representatives, Capitol, Washington," 1805
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (149)
- Jefferson's Inspiration for Skylit House Chamber**
 "Halle aux Bleus"
Picturesque Views of Public Edifices in Paris
 London: Gale, Curtis, Fenner, and Samuel Leigh, 1814, opp. p. 21
 Aquatint in book
 Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (150)
- House of Representatives Colonnade in Ruins After Fire**
 Attributed to Giovanni Andrei
 [The House of Representatives after the Burning of the Capitol by the British, 1814], c. 1815
 Pencil, ink, and ink washes on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (151)
- Colorful Temporary Senate Decorated with American Symbols**
 Attributed to George Bridport
 [Decoration of the Temporary Senate, West Half of the North Wing], c. 1808–1809
 Watercolor, pencil, and ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (152)
- Post-Fire Semicircular House Chamber**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Sketch of a Design for altering the plan of the House of Representatives in the Capitol U.S. Washington," 1815
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (153)
- Giant Corinthian Columns Used in House Chamber**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Design Proposed for the Hall of Representatives, U.S., Section from North to South," 1815
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol
 Donated by the U.S. Capitol Historical Society (154)

- Multiple-Faceted Rooms Surround House Chamber**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Plan of the Principal Floor of the South Wing of the Capitol as authorized to be built, 1817"
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (155)
- Earliest Painting of Capitol Interior**
 Samuel F.B. Morse
 [Night Session in the House, 1822]
 Oil on paper board
 National Museum of American Art,
 Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
 Museum Purchase through a grant from the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation (156)
- French Source for Latrobe's House Chamber**
 Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin
 [Senate Chamber, Luxembourg Palace, Paris, 1803–1807], c. 1807
 Engraving
 Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (157)
- Muse of History Records Events in House Chamber**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 [Details of the Hall of Representatives], 1815
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (158)
- Watercolor of Composite Capital**
 Attributed to Charles Bulfinch
 [Composite Capital], c. 1817–1829
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (159)
- Inspiration for Latrobe's Capitals in House Chamber**
 [Choragic Monument of Lysicrates]
 James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*. vol 1. London: John Haberkorn, 1762, Ch. IV, Plate VI
 Engraving in book
 Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
 Library of Congress (160)
- Latrobe Designs Capitol Crypt as Public Mausoleum**
 Benjamin Henry Latrobe
 "Ground Story of the Capitol, U.S.," 1806
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (161)
- Bulfinch Redesigns Center Building**
 Charles Bulfinch
 "Ground Plan of the Capitol of the United States showing the Projection and Division of the Center," c. 1818–1821
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (162)
- Bulfinch Plans Rotunda for "Great Public Occasions"**
 Charles A. Busby
 "The Capitol at Washington. Plan of the Principal Floor," 1823
 Copyprint
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (163)
- Grand Staircase Links Rotunda and Crypt**
 John Trumbull
 [Section through the Rotunda and Crypt with Stairs], 1818
 Pencil on paper
 John Trumbull Album
 Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York (164)
- Triple Ring of Columns Support Rotunda Floor**
 Charles Bulfinch
 [Plan of Center Building with Crypt]
 c. 1818–1822
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (165)
- Capitol's Crypt of 1822–1826 Resembles Those in European Churches**
 [Crypt of the Capitol], c. 1900
 Copyprint
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (166)
- Bulfinch's Alternate, Unexecuted Design of Capitol Rotunda**
 Charles Bulfinch
 "No. 2" [Section of Rotunda], c. 1824
 Ink on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (167)
- Earliest View of Rotunda as Built**
 Alexander Jackson Davis
 "Perspective View of Capitol Rotunda,"
 Pencil on paper
 From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (168)
- Architect Plans Book of Capitol Views and Plans**
 Alexander Jackson Davis
 "East Front of the Capitol," c. 1832–1834
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (169)
- First Measured Drawing of Capitol's Basement Floor as Built**
 Alexander Jackson Davis
 "Basement Plan of the Capitol," 1832
 Watercolor on paper
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (171)

Detailed Measured Drawing of Capitol's Main Floor as Built Alexander Jackson Davis "Capitol of the United States. Plan of Principal Floor," c. 1832–1834 Ink and ink washes on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (172)	Engraving in book The John Work Garrett Library, Special Collections Department The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (179)
Engraving of Measured Drawing of Main Floor Alexander Jackson Davis, designer; Archibald L. Dick, engraver "Capitol of the United States. Plan of the Principal Floor." c. 1832–1834 Ink and watercolor on paper Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (173)	Davis's Engraving of House Chamber Alexander Jackson Davis "Interior of the Hall of Representatives," c. 1832–1834 Engraving on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (180)
Engraving of Reflected Ceiling Plan of Capitol as Built Alexander Jackson Davis "Plan of the Ceilings of the Capitol of the United States, Washington," c. 1832–1834 Engraving on paper Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (174)	Sketches of Capitol's Exterior Details Alexander Jackson Davis [Details of West Wing Exterior], c. 1831–1834 Pencil on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (180.1)
Sketch of South Wall of House Chamber Alexander Jackson Davis [Sketch of the House of Representatives], c. 1832–1834 Pencil on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (175)	Bulfinch's Doric Order for Rotunda with Laurel Wreath Frieze Alexander Jackson Davis [Details of Rotunda Frieze], c. 1832–1834 Pencil on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (180.2)
Sketch Showing Ladies' Gallery Added to House Chamber Alexander Jackson Davis [Perspective Sketch of the House of Representatives], c. 1832 Pencil on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (176)	Details of Destroyed Library of Congress and Naval Monument Alexander Jackson Davis [Details of Library of Congress], c. 1832–1834 Pencil on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (180.3)
Looking Through House Chamber's South Colonnade Alexander Jackson Davis "Hall of Representatives, Wash.[ington], D.C." 1832 Watercolor on paper I.N. Phelps Stokes Collection Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, New York Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations (178)	Bird's-Eye Sketch of Bulfinch's Rotunda Alexander Jackson Davis [Perspective View of Rotunda, Capitol], c. 1832–1834 Pencil on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (180.4)
View of Roman Pantheon from Behind Column Screen "Veduta interna del Panteon d' Agrippa. . . ." Giuseppi Vasi, <i>Raccolta delle piu Belle vedute antiche, e Moderne di Roma</i> , Rome: 1786, Plate 25	Sketches of Corinthian Capitals in House Chamber Alexander Jackson Davis [Corinthian Capitals from the House of Representatives] c. 1832 Pencil on paper From the A.J. Davis Collection, Division of Drawings and Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York (180.5)

SECTION V. “*Freedom Triumphant in War and Peace*”: *The Capitol Extended*



“I hope to see the day when the new portions of the Capitol will contain the germs of a collection worthy the most powerful and most wealthy nation of the earth. The only one that can point to a prosperous people and an overflowing treasury.”

—Montgomery Meigs, 1854

*B*Y the close of the Civil War in 1865 the Capitol had been transformed from a sedate and self-contained building on a rather small scale to an exuberant and complex one of much greater size. Its breadth extended 751 feet across the brow of Capitol Hill and the feather-crested helmet of its crowning statue, *Freedom Triumphant in War and Peace*, rose 287 feet, 5 1/2 inches above ground level.

Philadelphia architect Thomas U. Walter had won the competition in 1851 for the Capitol’s extension. He and others presented designs based on three possibilities: making a square Capitol by building an addition on the east, placing new wings directly against the north and south walls, or attaching lateral wings to the old building via corridors. The latter, sanctioned by the Senate

Committee on Public Buildings, maintained much of the original Capitol's integrity.

WINGS

The new rectangular chambers were placed in the center of each wing at the suggestion of Captain Montgomery C. Meigs (1816–1892) of the Army Corps of Engineers. In 1853 Meigs was put in charge of operations. Until 1859 he chose the painters and sculptors who decorated the Capitol Extension, suggesting themes to them that expressed Euro-American dominance of the continent. Italian-born fresco painter Constantino Brumidi (1805–1880) spent twenty-five years decorating walls and ceilings of committee rooms, offices, and corridors, as well as the rotunda's frieze and canopy painting. His subjects ranged from a visual dictionary of American flora and fauna to American history primarily told through classical allegories.

DOME

The Capitol's cast-iron dome is one of the nineteenth-century's greatest engineering feats, 4,500 tons of iron cantilevered outward 14 feet from the original stone drum. Based ultimately on the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, but immediately on that of St. Isaac's in St. Petersburg, it rises through five successive stages to its crowning cupola and Thomas Crawford's statue of *Freedom Triumphant in War and Peace*. Senator Jefferson Davis argued that the liberty cap on Crawford's original figure was inappropriate to represent free-born Americans, as in ancient Rome it had been worn by freed slaves. Crawford changed *Freedom*'s headgear to a helmet decorated with stars and an eagle head sprouting feathers "suggested by the costume of our Indian tribes."

Brumidi's canopy painting suspended between the dome's inner and outer shells, *The Apotheosis of George Washington* (1864–1865), continued most of the themes suggested for the Capitol in the 1790s. Washington was elevated to the status of a god amidst a cast of allegorical and historical figures that represented American commercial, agricultural, and technological achievements. These include scenes of the laying of the transatlantic cable and Liberty handing Ceres, the goddess of agriculture, the reins of a team of horses pulling a reaping machine.

PEDIMENTS

Captain Meigs began planning pedimental sculpture for the new wings in 1853, asserting that the Capitol of a “Republic so much richer than the Athenian should . . . rival the Parthenon.” He proposed “the struggle between civilized man and the savage, between the cultivated and the wild nature” as a theme to two eminent American sculptors living in Rome, Thomas Crawford and Hiram Powers. Crawford responded with a design for the Senate wing’s east pediment, *The Progress of Civilization*, in which native Americans were “exterminated” (Crawford’s word) by a woodsman, soldier, schoolmaster, merchant, and industrial worker.

Ways of expressing American life had changed considerably by 1908 when Paul Bartlett began designing sculpture for the south wing’s pediment. As befitting its location, the sculptor and a joint congressional committee determined that the subject of the House pediment should be the present “life and labors of the people.” Bartlett planned two figural groups entitled the *Apotheosis of Democracy*, to represent the “labors of agriculture” and the “labors of industry.” Although figures in the central group, *Peace Protecting Genius*, were treated as abstract classical allegories, Bartlett’s other figures were heroic American farmers and foundrymen wearing their work clothes.

SECTION IV CHECKLIST

Portrait of the Architect of the Capitol Extension

Matthew Brady

“Thomas U. Walter”

Copyprint

Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (181)

Original Capitol as “Improved” and Extended Eastward

Thomas U. Walter

“Perspective View of a Plan for Enlarging the U.S. Capitol,” 1850

Watercolor on paper

Architect of the Capitol (182)

New House and Senate Chambers Located in Proposed Eastern Extension

Thomas U. Walter

“Plan of Principal Story. Design for an Enlargement of the U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.,” 1850

Watercolor on paper

Architect of the Capitol (183)

Proposed Lateral Wings Attached Directly to Original Building

Thomas U. Walter

[Design for the Extension of the Capitol], 1851

Watercolor on paper

The Athenaeum of Philadelphia (184)

Proposal to Orient New Wings toward Mall

Thomas U. Walter

“Design for an Extension of the U.S. Capitol.

Washington, D.C.,” 1851

Watercolor on paper

Architect of the Capitol (185)

Final Design of Capitol Extension

Thomas U. Walter

[Design for the Extension and New Dome of the United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.], 1855

Watercolor on paper

The Athenaeum of Philadelphia (186)

- Olmsted's Landscape Plan for Capitol Extension**
 Frederick Law Olmsted
 "General Plan for the Improvement of the U.S. Capitol Grounds," 1874
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (187)
- Walter's Senate Chamber Located on Capitol's Northwest Corner**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Plan of Principal Story, North Wing," 1856
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (188)
- Pediments with Sculpture Added to East Porticoes**
 Thomas U. Walter and Montgomery Meigs
 "Eastern Elevation of North Wing. Capitol Extension," 1853
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (189)
- Thornton's Original Corinthian Order Copied by Walter**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Exterior Order. Extension of U.S. Capitol," 1854
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (190)
- Decoration Interlocks with Structure**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Design for Eastern Doors. Extension of U.S. Capitol," c. 1863
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (191)
- Washington's Civic and Military Deeds Recalled**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Front Door, U.S. Capitol" c. 1853–1857
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (192)
- Senate Chamber Moved to Center of Wing**
 Thomas U. Walter and Montgomery Meigs
 "Plan of Principal Story, North Wing," c. 1856
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (193)
- Flat Glass Ceiling Covers Senate Chamber**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Plan of Attic Story, North Wing, U.S. Capitol Extension," c. 1853
 Ink and water-color on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (194)
- Elaborate Unexecuted Design for Senate Chamber**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Details of Senate Chamber, U.S. Capitol Extension," 1855
 Ink and water color on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (195)
- Walter's Second American Order**
 Thomas U. Walter
 [American Order in Senate Vestibule], 1858
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (196)
- Walter's First American Order a Puzzle**
 Thomas U. Walter
 [American Order in Hall of Columns, South Wing], 1855
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (197)
- Photograph of Lost Drawing of Vice President's Room Ceiling**
 Constantino Brumidi
 [Ceiling of the Vice President's Room, North Wing], c. 1856
 Copyprint
 Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (200)
- Italian Renaissance Model for Ceiling of Vice President's Room**
 "Coved Ceiling of the 'Stanza Della Segnatura' in the Vatican by Raphalle D'Urbino"
 Lewis Gruner, *Specimens of Ornamental Art*, London: Thomas McLean, 1850, p. 80
 Color engraving in book
 General Collections
 Library of Congress (201)
- Four Grand Approaches Lead to New House Chamber**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Plan of Principal Story, South Wing," 1856
 Ink and water color on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (202)
- Rich Coloration of New House Chamber Considered Garish**
 Edward Sachse
 "The House of Representatives, U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.," 1866
 Color lithograph
 Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress (203)
- Large Public Galleries in New Legislative Chambers**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Details of Gallery in Hall of Representatives," 1856
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (204)
- Passing of an Era Commemorated in House of Representatives Clock**
 Montgomery C. Meigs and William Henry Rinehart
 "Design for Clock for Hall of Representatives," 1858
 Photo, ink, and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (205)

- State Seals Painted on Glass**
Decorated House Ceiling
 Johannes A. Oertel
 [Delaware State Seal from the House of Representatives Chamber Ceiling], c. 1856
 Glass
 Delaware State Museums, Dover (206)
- Walter's Cast-Iron Dome Overwhelms Original Building**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Elevation of Dome of U.S. Capitol," 1859
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (207)
- Russian Model for Capitol's Dome**
 Ricard de Montferrand
 [Dome of St. Isaac's Cathedral, St. Petersburg], 1818–1858
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (208)
- Dome's Cast Iron is Both Decoration and Structure**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Section through Dome of U.S. Capitol," 1859
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (209)
- Figure of Freedom With Liberty Cap**
 Thomas Crawford
 [Second Design of *Freedom Triumphant in War and Peace*], 1855
 Copyprint
 Architect of the Capitol (210)
- Commemorative Statuette Combines Elements of Crawford's Three Designs of Freedom**
 Unknown maker after Thomas Crawford
 [Figure of *Freedom Triumphant in War and Peace*], c. 1855
 Sculpture, zinc with nickel-plated stars
 Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Set Charles Momjian (211)
- Jefferson Davis Opposes Liberty Cap on Freedom**
 Thomas U. Walter
 "Tholus on Dome of U.S. Capitol," 1859
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (212)
- Capitol Frieze Done in Monochromatic Painting to Imitate Sculpture**
 Constantino Brumidi
 "Oglethorpe and Muscogee Chief," c. 1859
 Oil wash on kraft paper
 Architect of the Capitol (214)
- Constantino Brumidi**
 "Lexington Insurrection" and "The Declaration of the Independence," c. 1859
 Oil wash on kraft paper
 Architect of the Capitol (215)
- Constantino Brumidi**
 "A Laborer in the Employ of Cap. Sutter," c. 1859
 Oil wash on kraft paper
 Architect of the Capitol (216)
- Constantino Brumidi**
 "America and History" and "The Landing of Columbus, 1492," c. 1859
 Oil wash on kraft paper
 Architect of the Capitol (216.1)
- Constantino Brumidi**
 "Cortez and Montezuma at Mexican Temple," c. 1859
 Oil wash on kraft paper
 Architect of the Capitol (216.2)
- Constantino Brumidi**
 "Col. Johnson [sic] & Tecumseh," c. 1859
 Oil wash on kraft paper
 Architect of the Capitol (216.3)
- Early Design of Dome's Canopy Painting Has Founding Fathers in Contemporary Dress**
 Constantino Brumidi
The Apotheosis of George Washington, c. 1859–1862
 Oil on canvas
 The Athenaeum of Philadelphia (217)
- Canopy Painting's Final Design Focusses on American Achievements**
 Constantino Brumidi
 "Brumidi's Allegorical Painting" c. 1865
 Color lithograph
 Prints and Photographs Division,
 Library of Congress (218)
- Euro-American Dominance of North American Continent Celebrated in Senate Pediment**
 Thomas Crawford
Progress of Civilization, c. 1853
 [Preliminary Sketch for Model of East Pediment of North Wing, U.S. Capitol]
 Ink and ink washes on paper
 Architect of the Capitol (219)
- Agricultural and Industrial Labors Represented Naturalistically**
 Paul Bartlett
Apotheosis of Democracy, 1908–1909
 [Preliminary Sketch Model of South Wing Pediment]
 Bronze
 James Monroe Museum and Memorial Library,
 Fredericksburg, Virginia (220)

"Peace" is Central Figure in House Pediment

Paul Bartlett

Head of "Peace," from *Peace Protecting Genius*, [Central group, South Wing Pediment], cast 1927

Bronze

James Monroe Museum and Memorial Library, Fredericksburg, Virginia (221)

"Genius" Represents the Spirit of the People in House Pediment

Paul Bartlett

Head of "Genius," from *Peace Protecting Genius*, [central group, South Wing Pediment] 1911–1913 Plaster

Tudor Place Foundation, Inc., Washington, D.C. (222)

SECTION VI.

"The Center and Heart of America": Political and Cultural Influence of the Capitol



"It is natural enough to suppose that the center and heart of America is the Capitol, and certainly, in its outward aspect, the world has not many statesier or more beautiful edifices." —Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1862

*T*he Capitol was an immediate popular success. Descriptions in travel accounts beginning in the 1810s often presented it as an accomplished fact, as did the earliest lithographs and engravings. As soon as Bulfinch's dome was raised, numerous engravings and color lithographs were printed of both facades, but the view from the west was most popular. Distant views of Capitol Hill seen from Pennsylvania Avenue or various elevated sites around the city were more popular in the 1830s and 1840s because they showed the newly planted trees that covered the grounds and provided a dark base upon which the white building seemed to float. Objects as diverse as Staffordshire pottery, jacquard coverlets, bandboxes, embroidered pictures, and candelabra were created using these prints. Even sheet music covers for patriotic marches reproduced the early printed views of the Capitol.

THE CAPITOL AS ANTI-SYMBOL

Success of the propaganda to represent the Capitol as America's "Temple of Freedom" can also be measured by its popularity as an anti-freedom symbol in abolitionist literature. The Capitol was portrayed in the background of many abolitionist tracts, as a backdrop for dehumanizing scenes and an ironic commentary on the dichotomy between the rhetoric and the reality of American liberty, freedom, and justice.

INFLUENCE OF THE CAPITOL

Many of America's state capitols built after 1830 were modelled on the national Capitol. A.J. Davis, architect who entered many competitions for state capitols in the 1830s and 1840s, brought a great deal of expertise to their design because of his thorough knowledge of the Washington Capitol gained between 1832 and 1834, when he did measured drawings of it. Unlike other architects who were content with flanking a central dome with legislative chambers, Davis copied many of the Capitol's room shapes and decorative details.

THE CAPITOL EXTENSION AND ADVERTISING

Most prints of the Capitol done before 1850 concentrated on the building and its grounds, but prints done after the Capitol Extension centered

the building in a panorama of the burgeoning city of Washington. Many late nineteenth-century commemorative objects showing the Capitol were made for tourists and often included views of several buildings and monuments. These prints and memorabilia had a limited audience, but advertisements using the Capitol as a backdrop reached the masses. The message they intended to convey was not only the national availability of manufactured and packaged goods, but the cachet of quality and dependability.

SECTION VI CHECKLIST

View of Washington from Home of George Washington's Adopted Grandson

Peder Anderson and Fitz Hugh Lane
“View of the City of Washington,” 1838
Color lithograph
Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (223)

Panorama of Washington from the Capitol

Robert P. Smith
“View of Washington,” 1850
Color lithograph
Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (224)

The Capitol as the Center of the World

Thomas Doughty
“Compendious Chart.”
Washington: P. Hawkes, 1827
Map
Geography and Map Division,
Library of Congress (225)

An Early Distant View of the Capitol

August Kollner
“West Front of the United States Capitol.”
New York: Goupil, Vibert, & Co., 1839
Lithograph
Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (226)

Early Perspective Engraving Widely Published

“Commercial Directory.” J.C. Kayser, 1823
Engraving
Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (229)

Early Prints of Capitol Transfer Printed onto Dishes

Staffordshire Teapot and Sugar Bowl Showing Capitol, after 1823
National Museum of American History,
Smithsonian Institution, Washington (230)

Copy of Lost Bulfinch Drawing of Completed Capitol

H. and J. Stokes, after Charles Bulfinch
“United States Capitol”
The Jackson Wreath. Philadelphia: Jacob Maas, 1829, p. 87
Engraving in book
Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
Library of Congress (231)

Lithographs Replace Engravings for Prints of Capitol

Charles Fenderich
“Elevation of the Eastern Front of the Capitol of the United States,” Washington:
William Fischer, 1839
Lithograph
Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (232)

Deceptive Close View of Capitol’s West Front

W.H. Bartlett
“Ascent to the Capitol”
Nathaniel P. Willis, *American Scenery*, vol. 1.
London: Virtue, 1840, opp. p. 37
Engraving in book
Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
Library of Congress (235)

Rococo-Revival Style Candelabra

Feature Capitol
Attributed to Henry Hooke and Company,
Boston
[Pair of Reverse-Glass-Painted Candelabra
Depicting the West Front of the Capitol],
c. 1850
Ormolu
Courtesy Murray B. Woldman and Joel M.
Woldman, Woldman & Woldman Antiques,
Alexandria, Virginia (236)

- Most Widely Copied Early View of Capitol**
W.H. Bartlett
“View of the Capitol at Washington”
Nathaniel P. Willis, *American Scenery*, vol. 1.
London: Virtue, 1840, frontispiece
Engraving in book
Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
Library of Congress (237)
- English Artist Decorates English Dishes with the Capitol**
Staffordshire platter with View of the West Front of the Capitol
Stoneware, after 1840
National Museum of American History,
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (238)
- Wallpaper with Capitol Made Specifically to Decorate Boxes**
Bandbox with Wallpaper View of the Capitol,
c. 1840
Cardboard and paper
Courtesy J. and D. Louv, Mizzentop Farm Antiques (239)
- “Coffee Table” Book of 1840 Illustrates Capitol**
“Capitol of the United States, Washington”
John Howard Hinton, *The History of the United States from the Earliest Period*. . . . London: J. and F. Tallis, c. 1843, p. 458
Engraving in book
Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
Library of Congress (240)
- Large Platter Makes Capitol Focal Point of Dinner Service**
Staffordshire Platter Showing Capitol,
c. 1814–1830
Stoneware
National Museum of American History,
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (241)
- Capitol Surrounded with Patriotic Symbols**
Double-Weave Jacquard Coverlet with Medallion of Capitol in a Laurel Wreath, 1846
Woven wool fabric
Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York (242)
- Abolitionists Use Capitol as Rallying Point**
Thomas S. Sinclair
“The Capitol March,” 1850
Sheet music cover
Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (243)
- Henry Clay’s Copy of Song Dedicated to Him**
Thomas S. Sinclair
“The National Union,” 1851
Sheet music cover
Music Division,
Library of Congress (244)
- Folk Artist Creates Appealing Capitol Image**
Unknown maker
Needlepoint picture of West Front of Capitol,
c. 1840
Wool yarn on fabric
Courtesy of Clarence and Joyce Brown (245)
- Burning of Capitol Seen as Divine Judgement**
“A View of the Capitol of the United States After the Conflagration in 1814”
Jesse Torrey, *A Portraiture of Domestic Slavery in the United States*. Philadelphia: Jesse Torrey, 1817, frontispiece
Engraving in book
Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
Library of Congress (246)
- The Rhetoric Versus the Reality of Liberty**
“United States Slave Trade, 1830”
Engraving on woven paper
Prints and Photographs Division,
Library of Congress (247)
- Abolitionists Deluge Congress with Petitions**
“A Sketch from God’s Description of the Consequences of Emancipation”
The American Anti-Slavery Almanac for 1837, Boston: N. Southard and D.K. Hitchcock, 1837
Pamphlet
Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
Library of Congress (248)
- Caricature of the “Capitol Inn”**
Adam Weingaertner
“The Happy Family.” New York: Nagel and Weingaertner, 1851
Lithograph
Collection of The New-York Historical Society, New York (249)
- North Carolina Capitol Design Based on National Capitol**
Alexander Jackson Davis
“Capitol of N.[orth] C.[arolina], Raleigh”
c. 1831–1833
Watercolor on paper
Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1924 (250)
- Indiana Capitol Interiors Derived from Latrobe’s Chambers**
Alexander Jackson Davis and Ithiel Town, designers
“Longitudinal Section through the Senate Chamber, the Rotondo, and Representatives Hall,” 1837 [Indiana State Capitol Design]
Ink and watercolor on paper
Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund (251)
- Latrobe’s Corinthian Order Basis for Giant Column Dedicated to Washington**
Alexander Jackson Davis
[Design for the Washington Monument in Richmond], 1849
Copyprint of ink and watercolor drawing
Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund (252)

Walter's Winning Design of Capitol Basis for Color Lithograph "View of Washington City," Baltimore: Edward Sachse & Co., 1852 Lithograph Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (253)	Psychology of the Unconscious Uses Capitol in Advertisement [Uneeda Biscuit Advertisement], c. 1900 Copyprint United States Senate Collection, Washington, D.C. (258)
Rare View of Washington East of the Capitol "Panoramic View of Washington City from the Dome of the Capitol, Looking East," Washington: Casimir Bohn, 1857 Lithograph Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (254)	Tobacco Named After Capitol Capitol Tobacco Label, c. 1880 Tobacco label Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (259)
Tobacco Label Promotes American Produce "The National Tobacco Company," 1868 Tobacco label Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress (255)	Capitol Functions as a "Seal of Approval" [Quaker Wheat Berries Advertisement], c. 1900 Copyprint Warshaw Collection National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (260)
Capitol Equated with "Faultless" Automobile [National Motor Vehicle Company Advertisement] <i>Cosmopolitan</i> (New York), February 1909 Copyprint General Collections, Library of Congress (256)	Plumbers to the U.S. Capitol [Durham System Advertisement], c. 1925 Copyprint United States Senate Collection, Washington, D.C. (261)
Capitol Used to Sell Coca-Cola [Coca-Cola Advertisement] <i>Everybody's Magazine</i> , December 1906 Copyprint General Collections, Library of Congress (257)	Capitol Center of Cosmopolitan Washington [Baker Motor Vehicle Advertisement] Copyprint from <i>Life</i> (New York) March 31, 1910 United States Senate Collection, Washington, D.C. (262)
	The Capitol Today Architectural Model of the Present Capitol, c. 1966 Plastic model Architect of the Capitol (266)

CONCLUSION

Writing to Benjamin Franklin in 1782, patriot Robert Morris remarked that "in a Government like ours the Belief creates the Thing." Certainly the belief in what the Capitol could convey about that government sustained the many statesmen and architects who created the building. Conceived in the spirit of ancient republics, slowly built to embody the political and social values of the Constitution, and nurtured by the continuous unfolding of national events, the Capitol's art and architecture presents the broad sweep of American aspirations and history. Today the Capitol is a distillation of two hundred years of what Henry James, writing in *The American Scene* in 1907, called the "whole American spectacle." Even before it was finished, numerous prints began to make the Capitol a familiar icon, as architecturally vital and ambitious as the institutions it housed.

STAFF FOR THE EXHIBITION

Pamela Scott curated the exhibition and wrote the catalogue and brochure. Members of the Interpretive Programs Office who contributed to the exhibition were: Irene U.Burnham, Interpretive Programs Officer; Martha E. Hopkins, Coordinator of Exhibitions; Deborah Durbeck, Production Officer; Tambda Johnson and Sally Livingston, Registrars, and Juliet Acker, Denise Agee, Tina Carr, Jennifer Chisholm, Kendall Christian, Christopher O'Connor, Cheryl Regan, Gene Roberts, and Gwynn Wilhelm. Others who helped guide the exhibits direction were C. Ford Peatross, Curator of Architecture, Engineering, and Design in the Prints and Photographs Division; William C. Allen, Architectural Historian of the United States Capitol, and Barbara Wolanin, Curator of the Capitol.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks are also due to the following members of the Library of Congress staff for their assistance with the exhibition: Thomas Albro, Riki Condon, Ken Grant, Doris Hamburg, Renata Mesmer, Margo McFarland, Marilee Oliver, Ann Sibert, Linda Steiber, Heather Wanser, and Mary Wooten, Conservation Office; Norma Baker and Jan Lauridsen, Development Office; Marvin Kranz, Manuscript Division; Fred Harrison, Kimberly Lord, and Peggy Pixley Office Systems Services; Yusef El-Amin, Marita Clance, and Jim Higgins, Photoduplication Service; Mary Ison, Harry Katz, Sam Daniel, Jan Grenci, Marilyn Ibach, Maja Keech, Pamela Posz, and Jane Van Nimen, Prints and Photographs Division; John Cole and Margaret Wagner, Publishing Office; Anthony Edwards, Clark Evans, Joan Higbee, Charles Kelly, Declan Murphy, and Robert Shields, Rare Books and Special Collections Division; Frank Carroll, Georgia Higley, and Mark Sweeny, Serials and Government Publications Division.

Many institutions and private collectors kindly lent objects for the exhibition. Special thanks are owed to the following individuals: Michael Plunkett and George Riser, Alderman Library, University of Virginia; Beth Carroll-Horrocks and Rita Dockery, American Philosophical Society; Linnea Dix, Ann Kenny, Pamela Violente McConnell, Eric Paff, Dana Strickland, Kim Soucy, and Sarah Turner, Curator's Office of the Architect of the Capitol; Bruce Laverty, Atheneum of Philadelphia; Andrée Pouderoux, Bibliothèque Nationale de France; Ruth O'Brien, Carpenter's Company of the City and County of Philadelphia; Dan Kany and Janet Parks, Avery Fine Arts Library, Columbia University; Ann Baker Horsey, Delaware State Museums; Lee Langston-Harrison, James Monroe Museum and Memorial Library; Elizabeth Gommbosi, Harvard University; Bonnie Hedges, Historical Society of Washington; James Greene, Library Company of Philadelphia; Elizabeth Gordon and Jeff Goldman, Maryland Historical Society; Peter Drumie and Chris Steele, Massachusetts Historical Society; Kevin Avery, American Wing; Catherine Bindman and Raphael Pita, Department of Drawings and Prints, Patricia Farrar and Mary Doherty, Photograph Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Elizabeth Kirwan, National Library of Ireland; Sylvie Péharpré, Musée National de la Coopération Franco-Américaine; James Zender, National Archives; Sarah Sibbald, National Gallery of Art; Mary Beth Betts, Annette Blaugren, Jim Francis, and Jack Rutland, The New-York Historical Society; Roberta Waddell, Print Division, New York Public Library; Sherry Birk and Charlotte Krull, Octagon Museum, American Institute of Architects Foundation; Judy Gardner-Flint, The Johns Hopkins University; Courtney D'Angelis, National Museum of American Art; John Fleckner and Ann Kuebler, Archives Center, Richard Doty, Department of Numismatics, Sheila Alexander, Bonnie Lillianfeldt, and Susan Meyers, Department of Ceramics and Glass, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution; Kathleen Betts, The Society of the Cincinnati; Franz Jantzen, Supreme Court; James Danke, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Mindy Black, Ann Lucas, and Susan Stein, Monticello/Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Inc.; James Ketcham and Melinda Smith, United States Senate Commission on Art; Eleanor Preston and Ann Webb, Tudor Place Foundation, Inc.; and Betty Monkman, The White House. Private collectors who were of great assistance include Arthur D. Arendt, Clarence and Joyce Brown, John Long, Jack and Diane Louv, Mr. and Mrs. Set Charles Momjian, Arthur J. Phelan, and Murray B. Woldman.

Additional scholars who generously shared their expertise include Kevin Avery, Charles E. Brownell, Douglas Ball, Neil Bingham, Jeffrey Cohen, Olive Graffam, Diana Hale, Don Alexander Hawkins, Alvin Holm, Richard Janson, Mills Lane, Anne Poulet, Jeffrey Cohen, Catherine Rubincam, and Thomas P. Somma.

George Sexton Associates, Washington, D.C., designed the exhibit. The staff members involved were George Sexton III, Terry Ammons, Simon Blakey, Thomas Biggar, Rebecca Davies, Joseph Geitner, Steve Heidlauf, Nelson Jenkins, Elizabeth Jones, Peter Kozloski, Jeanne Krohn, Diana Pabon, Doug Pierson, Roy Robinson, Mary Sarant, Karin Salch, Barbara Shaw, Jean Sundin, David Tozer, and Tom Uzzell.

The exhibition was made possible by generous grants from the James Madison Council of the Library of Congress and the Philip Morris Companies Inc. Development and publication of the catalog and the opening event were made possible by the Philip Morris Companies Inc.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

- The first American Symbol, invented in 1754 by Benjamin Franklin for the masthead of his newspaper the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Serial and Government Publications Division (1)
- The advertisement in *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser* of March 24, 1792, that invited architects to submit designs for the Capitol to a competition. Serial and Government Publications Division (30)
- View of the East Front of the Capitol prepared by Architect Alexander Jackson Davis in the 1830s. Prints and Photographs Division (169)
- Section drawing made by Latrobe in 1804 in response to Jefferson's request that the new House chamber have a skylit ceiling and a simple Doric order. Prints and Photographs Division (148)
- Thomas U. Walter's elevation for the cast-iron dome added to the Capitol in 1860s. Architect of the Capitol (207)
- Robert P. Smith's "View of Washington," 1850, showing the Capitol and the city just before the Extension. Prints and Photographs Division (224)

CHRONOLOGY OF THE U.S. CAPITOL

- 1791 April 10* Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson wrote Pierre Charles L'Enfant that he hoped the Capitol would be based on "some one of the models of antiquity which have had the approbation of thousands of years."
- 1792 March–July* Competition for Capitol's design held but no entries found acceptable.
- 1793 July–*
1794 January French-trained architect Stephen Hallet hired to submit several proposals and physician and amateur architect William Thornton submitted post-competition design to President George Washington.
- 1793 February 1* Jefferson reported to Commissioners of the District of Columbia that he and Washington preferred Thornton's design because it was "simple, noble, beautiful, excellently distributed, and moderate in size."
- 1793 March 11* Commissioners formally awarded Thornton the first prize, Hallet the second.
- 1793 July 15* Conference held in Philadelphia, resulting in a compromise design that combined Thornton's exteriors and Hallet's interiors.
- 1793 (?)* Jefferson suggested that House and Senate chambers be located at ground level, overlooked by second-story public galleries. Thornton's exterior giving greatest prominence to second story maintained.
- 1793 September 18* Cornerstone laid with Masonic ceremony; Washington participated.
- 1795-1798* English architect George Hadfield served as the Capitol's superintending architect.
- 1797-1798* Thornton revised his original design to include a "Temple of Fame," or "Temple of Virtue," that overlooked the Mall.

- 1800 November 22* Sixth Congress met in completed north wing, the Senate in two-story, east-facing room, the House temporarily in large room across hall.
- 1801–1804* First House chamber, an elliptical room, designed and built by James Hoban, architect of the President's House. Dismantled because of faulty construction.
- 1803 March 6* Jefferson appointed English-born, but pan-European trained architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe.
- 1804–1808* Latrobe designed a new House chamber on the second floor. Its hippodrome shape was defined by a colonnade of Greek Corinthian columns and its skylit roof, suggested by Jefferson, was inspired by the modern grain market in Paris.
- 1804–1810* Latrobe redesigned the poorly constructed north wing's interiors, eventually replacing Hallet's Senate with the Doric Supreme Court on the ground floor and the Ionic Senate above it.
- 1806* Latrobe presented Jefferson with a perspective watercolor of the Capitol's new east facade. A single, low, Roman Pantheon-inspired rotunda and dome were approached by a deep, wide staircase and entered through an elaborate portico-colonnade. Rotunda labelled "Hall of the People" on plan.
- 1808–1809* Latrobe designed first two American orders, the corncob vestibule outside the Supreme Court and the magnolia-flower columns for the Senate.
- 1808–1809* Latrobe designed a two-and-a-half-story Library of Congress in the Egyptian Revival style.
- 1810–1811* Latrobe proposed Doric Greek Revival propylaea (gateway in the form of a temple) as entrance on Capitol's west front and a statue of *Athena as American Liberty* atop

- portico overlooking Mall. Dome's octagonal drum to have relief sculpture based on Panathenaic Procession on Parthenon.
- 1814 August 24 Capitol burned by British troops during War of 1812; House and Senate chambers both destroyed.
- 1815 March 14 Latrobe reappointed by President James Madison.
- 1815–1817 Latrobe redesigned House as a semicircular room, enlarged Senate, invented third American order based on tobacco plant, and proposed new west wing with Library of Congress overlooking Mall.
- 1817 November 20 Latrobe resigned position as Capitol's architect.
- 1818 January 8 President James Monroe officially appointed Boston architect Charles Bulfinch Architect of the Capitol.
- 1818–1822 Bulfinch constructed west wing, inserting sub-basement story of offices and designing Library of Congress with ancient Greek architectural order.
- 1822 Summer Bulfinch planned rotunda's decoration, relief-sculptured panels by Italian and French artists who depicted pre-Revolutionary War events to complete John Trumbull's history paintings of the Revolution's great civic and military events.
- 1822–1826 Bulfinch constructed double dome, a high, outer wood shell the shape of which was chosen by James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, and an inner brick-and-wood dome in emulation of the Roman Pantheon's dome.
- 1825–1826 Luigi Persico executed east pediment sculpture, the *Genius of America*, a composite design drawing upon suggestions made by John Quincy Adams as well as many of the competitors.

- 1826–1829 Bulfinch landscaped Capitol grounds, erecting a terrace and gatehouses on the west.
- 1850 Fall Senate Committee on Public Buildings announced competition for Capitol Extension.
- 1851 June 10 President Millard Fillmore appointed Thomas U. Walter Architect of the Capitol Extension. Lateral wing design chosen over an eastern extension.
- 1853 March 4 Authority over Capitol Extension transferred from Department of the Interior to Department of War. Captain Montgomery C. Meigs of the Army Corps of Engineers put in charge.
- 1853 October 31 American sculptor Thomas Crawford sent from Rome designs for Senate wing pediment entitled *The Progress of Civilization* and for door depicting major events in Washington's public career.
- 1855 March 3 Congress passed first appropriation for new cast-iron dome designed by Walter.
- 1855–1863 Crawford's bronze statue of *Freedom Triumphant in War and Peace*, designed for the summit of dome.
- 1859–1884 Italian-born and -trained artist Constantino Brumidi decorated Capitol interiors with fresco paintings based on Italian Renaissance models. *America in History* done for the rotunda frieze and *The Apotheosis of George Washington* for the canopy painting suspended between the double domes.
- 1908–1916 Paul Bartlett designed and executed pedimental sculpture entitled *The Apotheosis of Democracy* for the House of Representatives pediment.

